

February 1994

Letters to the Editor

Katina Strauch
Against the Grain

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor are welcome! How else do we know if you are reading and reacting to ATG? — Yr. Ed.



Dear Editor:

Sorry to bug you with these minor details when you are beginning to gear up for your conference (I will be at the New York Library Assoc. meeting), but I didn't get very far into the "And They Were There" section on the NASIG meeting (September 1993), when I noticed glaring errors in the names of some of the speakers. On page 19, right column, it's Allen RENEAR; on p.20 first column it's C. Edward WALL, p.20 last column, it's Jim STEPHENS. Several of these people are pretty well known in library-land, so folks might wonder what happened.

Anyway, I do enjoy reading each issue, and particularly enjoyed this issue's interview with Becky Lenzini. Keep up the good work!

Susan Davis
(New York Academy of Medicine)

Ed note: Mea culpa. We tried to rectify this mistake (or made note of it in the November issue). Our apologies to Mr. Renear, Mr. Wall, and Mr. Stephens, as well as NASIG and not to mention our readers! — Yr. Ed.

Dear Editor:

You are an idiot! How could you have left out the acknowledgments to the companies which regularly contribute to the

well-being of your fine publication? I am speaking specifically of **Ambassador Book Service**, **The Book House**, and **Ballen Booksellers International**, three excellent companies which you FORGOT to acknowledge in the November, 1993 issue of *ATG*. What are you doing? Where is your brain? You owe them a tremendous apology.

Sincerely,

Katina Strauch
(College of Charleston)

Ed note: What can I say? My idiocy is, if it wasn't before, now legend. I apologize to these companies. I have no excuses, just apologies. — Yr. Ed.

Dear Editor:

I read with interest the column, "Issues in Vendor/Library Relations: To Prepay or Not to Prepay," by Judy Webster. In the article, Ms. Webster states that libraries may want to call publishers to find out if the vendor is paying bills on time.

As a former credit manager, I don't think this is legal, and even if it is legal, it would be a breach of business ethics to give out such information. There are strict rules governing the use of credit information, and in my opinion, this falls outside of them.

Personally, I would never give such information to a library, unless the ven-

dor informed me in writing that a specific library could call and get that information from me. (With today's sue now, pay later society, I might not even do it then.) But then, that ruins the whole element of spontaneity; of course, a vendor with a problem is going to say it is perfectly all right to call and get references from publishers with whom they are current.

A Dun & Bradstreet isn't much better. Companies typically pick the suppliers who are listed. Dun & Bradstreet asks them for their experience and that is summarized on the form.

My advice, not that it's been asked for, is summed up nicely by Ms. Webster's "common sense" point number 3: watch the vendor's pattern. This is the kind of thing credit managers also look at very closely. When an account that typically trades in a particular pattern for a long time changes that pattern, the red flags should go up. At that point, immediately pick up the phone and find out what's going on.

I enjoy your magazine and feel that you are doing all of us, publishers, vendors, and libraries, a very important service.

Sincerely,

David Mitchell
(Business Manager, Guilford Publications)

continued on page 76

We would like to thank
Ambassador Book Service
and **The Book House**
for their generous contributions!
Thanks go as well to **Ballen Booksellers**,
Franklin Book Company, and **Sage Publications**.

Letters

continued from page 7

Dear Editor:

First I'd like to say how much I enjoy ATG. Thanks for ATG's (NOT SMALL) contribution to "our world." I've just finished reading the interview with Paul Sybrowski (September 1993). Unfortunately, there isn't a byline on the interview article. I'd really like to know who was responsible for the wonderful interview... I would have asked all the same questions!

Thanks in advance for your response.

Sincerely,

Christine Patterson

(Blackwell North America)

Ed note: Several of the questions for the interview with Paul Sybrowski were penned by Russ Clement (Brigham Young University) and Crystal Ashton of Dynix. The interview was actually conducted by Yours Truly. — KS

Dear Editor:

Citing the recent passage of an amendment prohibiting the city from instituting any laws protecting the rights of gays

and lesbians, ALA has decided to boycott Cincinnati as the site of its 1995 Midwinter meeting. ALA has decided that, in their own words, "You can't put a price tag on human rights." End of debate. No one can argue that you can put a price tag on human rights. Those of us who might want to argue that boycotts don't work, or that boycotts hurt many of the people they are intended to help, or that ALA should have learned from the Equal Rights Amendment boycott that this will be a very expensive failure, we are silenced by the politically correct high moral ground staked out by the boycotters. If you want to argue against this, you are one of those homophobes who think that you can put a price tag on equal rights.

There is a certain irony in this, however. ALA recently said that they could not cancel the Miami Beach 1994 meeting because it would cost too much and the association would get a bad name in the world of convention bookers. The groundswell of anti Miami Beach opinion is based mostly on human safety, not on human rights. Evidently, ALA feels fine about putting a price tag on that. Anyone who has been to Miami Beach recently finds the safety issue real, and frightening. Armed guards patrol outside convenience stores. Signs warn car renters not to stop if they are in an accident. Car rental companies force customers to sign a written statement that they were given a map; if they get lost

and are killed, the company has proof it was not their fault and should not be sued (they will be anyway).

Miami has one of the highest crime rates in the country, and unlike many other cities, a lot of the crime is directed at tourists. It is a dangerous place, especially for people like us, unfamiliar with the "safe" areas, walking from hotel to hotel as we attend meetings or visit with friends. ALA should have known better than to book a convention in a city that many people have the sense to stay away from. By not canceling now, ALA invites an informal boycott that will, along with the official politically correct Cincinnati boycott, be quite costly to them.

The ALA leadership can afford to ignore price tags because they know that we members will make it up in higher dues. Gay rights is a fundamental human right. The Cincinnati politicians are wrong, and the courts will deal with their particular brand of discrimination the way the Denver courts have. ALA, in the meantime, ought to concern itself with the safety of its members, as well as the price tag that its members may not be willing to pay.

Name Withheld

Ed note: We got this letter, unsigned, and the editorial board has decided to publish it as a letter to the editor even though it is unsigned. Opinion is what life is all about. ☺

Rumors

continued from page 6

vacation. She may not have tracked mountain lions for EarthWatch but she did spend a week cycling the coast of California from Pacific Grove/Monterey to San Simeon. This was her third bicycle vacation where she stayed in bed and breakfasts every night and cycled during the day. She says it's the luxury way of getting some exercise — great meals, the tour service transports your bags from place to place, and they fix a picnic lunch every day. They even repair the bikes if there is any problem. Can I take my car next year, Carol?

Leigh-Anne Cubberley (Faxon) had a baby boy the first week of January. Congratulations. Leigh-Anne!

The UKSG (UK Serials Group) has announced their 1994 Annual Conference, 11-14 April at the University of

Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. For further details contact: Mrs. Jill Tolson, 114 Woodstock Road, Witney OX8 6DY UK.

The world renowned naturalist, **Roger Tory Peterson**, artist and author, celebrated his 85th birthday along with over 500 friends, seven of whom were high school classmates, and admirers at the dedication ceremony of the Roger Tory Peterson Institute, in his hometown, Jamestown, New York, on August 29. The 5 million dollar building stands in the area where Peterson first started searching for birds as an eleven-year-old boy. Several librarians and booksellers were in attendance, including at least two Charleston Conference regulars: **Virginia Rodes**, and **Lyman W. Newlin** for ATG. This tidbit compliments of the amazing Lyman!

Proposals for the 1994 LAPT (Library Acquisitions: Practice &

Theory) Research Award are due by **February 15, 1994** and should be addressed to: **Carol Pitts Hawks**, Editor-in-Chief, LAPT; 2129 Sandston Road; Columbus, OH 43220. (614) 292-6314; FAX: (614) 292-2015; Internet: hawks.1@osu.edu.

Speaking of **Virginia Rodes**, **Lyman Newlin** reports that she has a new job with BIOSIS as manager of electronic product sales. Her primary responsibility is managing single-fee tape leasing of BIOSIS Previews.

Peter Pyclik is the new president of Faxon replacing **Dick Rowe**. See our interview with him in this issue, page 42. And there are more changes at Faxon. **Gary Brown** has been promoted to Sales Director for all Latin America clients. **Donna Reynolds** has been promoted to National Sales Manager for Corporate Clients in the U.S. And **Adrian Alexander** (Regional Sales Manager for